Anti-smoking Treaty

*179. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Health Assembly had adopted a draft Anti-smoking Treaty with the support of 170 nations;

(b) if so, whether India has subscribed and signed the treaty;

(c) whether US, Germany and China have objected to the treaty; and

(d) if so, the details of their objections?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (d) The 56th World Health Assembly held in May, 2003, unanimously adopted the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). India signed the FCTC on 10th September, 2003, and later on ratified the same on 5th February, 2004. USA, Germany and China have since signed the FCTC.

Inflated price of imported Potash

†*180. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the middlemen usurp a major part of the subsidy being provided by Government for importing potash by showing the inflated price *i.e.* more than the international price;

(b) whether increase in the rate by even one dollar results in loss of crores of rupees to Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reaction of Government and the action being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No Sir, the import of Muriate of Potash (MoP) is decanalised and can be imported freely. M/s. Indian Potash Ltd. (IPL) a joint sector company is the major importer of MoP, who imports almost 60% of the entire quantity. Normally,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

IPL negotiates the price of MoP with the international suppliers during the beginning of financial year and it also works as a reference price for other importers of MoP in the country. After examining the price negotiated by IPL and the price of MoP prevailing in the international market Government of India decides the price of MoP to be taken for computation of concession rates as Government has to ensure that the adequate quantity of MoP should be made available to the farmers at affordable price.

(b) to (d) At an exchange rate of Rs. 46 per US dollar the impact by way of subsidy/concession payment for increase in MoP price by one dollar on Government is about Rs. 12 crore on the estimated consumption of 25 lakh MT of MoP per annum.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

MoU between IGKV and Swiss MNC

493. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Raipur based Indira Gandhi Krishi Viswavidyalaya, having a collection of rice germ plasm of 22972 varieties, proposes to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with "Syngenta", the Swiss multinational corporation, to take over all the paddy varieties in the custody of the universities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether farmers and agricultural workers have represented against the MoU and requested to assert their rights over the variety of paddy seeds; and

(d) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Indira Gandhi Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya (IGKW) is not proposing to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with "Syngenta" to take over all the rice germplasm/varieties. Discussions were earlier held between scientists of IGKW and Syngenta representatives to develop and market rice hybrids. IGKW did not contemplate to give or share rice germplasm accessions with Syngenta or any other multinational corporation.